

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for purifying a 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer produced by a microorganism,
which comprises treating an aqueous suspension containing the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer separated from a microorganism with [[a]] hydrogen peroxide while controlling the pH of said aqueous suspension by adding an alkali either continuously or intermittently,
wherein the pH of the aqueous suspension is controlled to be between 8 and 13.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Previously Presented) The purification method according to Claim 1,
wherein the concentration of hydrogen peroxide in the aqueous suspension is in a range of 0.01 to 1 % by weight.
4. (Previously Presented) The purification method according to Claim 1,
wherein the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer is a copolymer of D-3-hydroxyhexanoate and one or more other D-3-hydroxyalkanoic acids.
5. (Previously Presented) The purification method according to Claim 1,
wherein the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer is a copolymer constituted of at least two species of monomers selected from a group consisting of 3-hydroxypropionate, 3-hydroxybutyrate, 3-hydroxyvalerate, 3-hydroxyhexanoate, 3-hydroxyheptanoate and 3-hydroxyoctanoate.
6. (Previously Presented) The purification method according to Claim 1,
wherein the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer is a binary copolymer derived from D-3-hydroxyhexanoate and D-3-hydroxybutyrate, or a ternary copolymer derived from D-3-hydroxyhexanoate, D-3-hydroxybutyrate and D-3-hydroxyvalerate.

7. (Previously Presented) The purification method according to Claim 1, wherein the microorganism producing the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer is a microorganism belonging to the genus *Aeromonas*.

8. (Original) The purification method according to Claim 7, wherein the microorganism producing the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer is *Aeromonas caviae* or *Aeromonas hydrophila*.

9. (Previously Presented) The purification method according to Claim 1, wherein the microorganism producing the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer is a cell strain of microorganism transformed by a poly-3-hydroxyalkanoic acid synthase group gene derived from *Aeromonas caviae*.

10. (Previously Presented) The purification method according to Claim 1, wherein the aqueous suspension of the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer is obtainable by;
solubilizing the total or part of cell constituent substances
other than the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer to separate the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer by adding an alkali simultaneously with physical disruption while stirring a suspension of a 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer-containing strain, and
suspending the 3-hydroxyalkanoic acid copolymer in water.